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CHARLIE.

CHARLIE is our pet dog. He is a handsome specimen of what is usually called a 'King Charles' spaniel, black and tan in colour, sleek, and with beautifully long ears, hanging like a silken drapery over the sides of his head. His dark eyes are brisk and intelligent. And when standing in an inquiring attitude, he is quite a picture. Charlie is two years of age. As near as we can guess, he was born on Christmas Day 1873, and so we have fixed on every returning Christmas as his birthday. Although aristocratic in appearance, Charlie is of humble birth. He was one of a litter reared by a breeder, and his early days were spent in a plain cottage in the suburbs. It was only by advertising for a dog of his kind that we heard of him.

The first interview with a dog which is to be your companion and joy of your life for years, is always memorable. On a certain wintry evening, while we are seated in the drawing-room, the door-bell is rung, and the servant announces that there is a man in the lobby with two dogs for sale. The two little creatures were brought upstairs to be exhibited. They were amazingly like each other. One was called Charlie, and the other Princie. The choice betwixt the two was most difficult. At length, one thing determined the selection. Charlie's nose, as we thought, was a trifle smaller and neater than the nose of Princie, and he was preferred. Five pounds were paid for him, and poor Princie was dismissed. We were sorry for Princie then and afterwards. He never found a purchaser, and died young, the victim of an infantile dog disease.

That was Charlie's start in life. There he was, all at once introduced to a scene such as he had never seen before. All around him were gay mirrors, sofas, and chandeliers. Yet he did not manifest any surprise, and that is a remarkable feature in dogs. They are never surprised at anything, nor do they hang back with any degree of bashfulness. No courtier could have acquitted himself with more propriety or com-

posure on the occasion than this little untutored dog. Being put down on the floor, he in the first place took a general survey, and then sauntered about to gain a knowledge of particulars. Meandering below sofas and chairs, his attention was riveted on a fine engraving of Sir Francis Burdett (a prized gift) in a frame, which leant against the wall previous to its being hung up. Charlie looked long at Sir Francis with his top-boots, and his dog stretched out beside him. Perhaps it was the dog more than the boots that fixed his attention. Anyway, he seemed to feel an interest in the picture, for in his ramble he returned to take a second and a third look. We congratulated ourselves with having got a dog which possessed a taste for the fine arts.

Charlie soon felt himself at home in the establishment. Every one admired and was kind to him. He deserved their love and attention. Nothing could surpass his docility and gentleness. Clever, agile, he jumped on chairs and tables, never discomposing anybody or anything. Brought up with commendable habits, and always amusing, he grew up the pet of the household; and so he has continued. It was a redeeming feature in the stern character of the ancient Romans that they associated in a kindly way with pet dogs. In the Columbaria, outside the walls of Rome, is pointed out an earthen vase containing the ashes of a little dog, described as having been the *DELICUM* of the household. Charlie is our *DELICUM*. So funny, so winning, so easily satisfied, so obedient, so companionable! Affording from morning to night so much matter of talk as to what he has been doing, where he has been, whether the weather is suitable for going out, what this or that lady visitor has said about him, and so forth in endless chatter filling up pauses in conversation, he proves useful as an antidote to the kind of dullness which is apt to creep over a small family devoid of bustling youngsters. For these and other reasons, it would be painful to contemplate the possibility of either losing or doing without him. We hope to get through the remainder of life in companionship with Charlie.

It is easy to express such a hope. Dogs are short-lived. Their little span is usually ten to twelve years. All dog-lovers, therefore, have in the course of time to incur successive pangs in parting for ever with their cherished favourites. The fondly attached creatures are gone. Their place is vacant. The accustomed cushion by the fireside, the little bed nightly prepared for them, the comb and brush provided for their morning toilet, the crystal jars of water set about for their use, the coat made to protect them from the wet and cold, know them no more. In going out for a walk without them there is a feeling of desolation. Nature appears dull and out of sorts. Inside as well as outside the dwelling there is a mournful consciousness of an irreparable loss—the loss perhaps felt the more acutely, because meeting with little general sympathy. Can we say there is anything unreasonable in feeling for the loss of a being which has innocently engaged the affections? To a dwelling whence in the course of Providence children have been sadly swept away—possibly never vouchsafed—God has given the dog. It is of imperfect intelligence—a four-footed creature below the dignity and deprived of the hopes of humanity, but it has sensibilities and attachments much beyond what are manifested in the lower animals, and, properly treated, is the willing assistant, the friend, we might almost say the worshipper of man. Viewed in the light of a gift to compensate to some extent for what is withheld or taken away, it may agreeably fill up a void, and in doing so realise a truly beneficent design in Nature. So strong is the attachment formed for his master or mistress that in their removal by death, the dog will try still to be with them. He will follow them in despairing agony to the grave—or to the scaffold. At that foul midnight murder of the Duc d'Enghien by order of Bonaparte in the fosse of Vincennes; his little dog laid itself down disconsolately to perish on his grave. At that dreadful execution of Mary Queen of Scots, in the castle of Fotheringay, a little pet dog which had followed her unobserved was found nestling in the garments of its beloved and grievously outraged mistress.

We have not in our day been unacquainted with the feelings which are apt to be experienced in the loss of a favourite dog. Twice have we gone through the distressing ordeal, and twice did we form a resolve not to suffer the like again. The blank, however, was so great, that like others in similar circumstances, the rash resolve was departed from. Let us say a few words regarding the two pet dogs who were the predecessors of Charlie.

Our first dog was Fiddy, a lively little spaniel of the black and tan variety, but not quite pure in breed, for she had a few white hairs on the breast, and I am inclined to think she had in her a dash of the cocker; for she had a capital nose, and at all proper opportunities while in the country she was on the outlook for game, her tail all the time going at a great rate. Fiddy was born in

1847. Her father, named Tom, and her mother, called Beauty, belonged to a lady of our acquaintance, who generously made a present of pups to all who would accept of them. Such she did for years. A peculiarity attended the progeny of Tom and Beauty. The longer they lived their pups fell off from the black and tan variety, till they degenerated into party-coloured animals—always charming little dogs, but evidently partaking of the quality of some far-off mottled original.

Fiddy possessed a good deal of character. Gentle, affectionate, and docile, she yet in the way of walks and runs liked to have a little of her own way. She did not approve of always going in one direction, but preferred variety, so as to make fresh investigations among bushes. Her diverting ways led to the idea of writing her autobiography, which I prepared, nominally as editor, in a small volume, as a specimen of fanciful typography for the International Exhibition in Hyde Park in 1851. It was styled *Fiddy, an Autobiography, edited by her Master*. Only a very few copies were printed for private circulation, and as I know of only two copies being in existence, it must be considered to be about the rarest book in Her Majesty's dominions.

One or two short extracts from the autobiography to give a notion of the thing: Fiddy being taken on a visit to a small country town on the banks of the Tweed, writes as follows: 'Here there was only one dog with which I occasionally had a run on the green. He was called Dandy, and lived within a neighbourly distance. Dandy was a Scotch terrier, with an astonishingly long body and short legs. He had a large head, and if not wise, he had at least a look of great gravity. Dandy could not run very fast, and I always outstripped him in a race. But he was good-humoured, and never was angry when I teased him. One day when Dandy called on me, we had a conversation respecting the different ways in which dogs live. He distressed me very much by saying that at night he thought himself well-off when he got the mat at the room-door to lie upon. He seemed to envy me when I mentioned that I was provided with a regular bed, fitted up in a basket for my use, and also, that every attention was daily paid to my toilet. Until this moment, he had no conception of such refinements. . . . Dandy possessed strange notions of independence. When his master was absent from home for a few days, he went off composedly on jaunts on his own account. In this way he visited a number of farm-houses within a circuit of four or five miles, where he was well known and hospitably entertained, and renewed his acquaintance with the collies and terriers of the different establishments.

'Returning to town, I was destined to pine. Master and mistress departed on a journey to a far-distant place, and were absent a long time. They went away at the end of March 1849. On the day before their departure, I suspected what was about to occur. I saw much packing of portmanteaus and

carpet-bags. I could only look on in silent regret, and pensively wag my tail. Nothing could amuse me. It was in vain I was told "there was a cat in the garden." If there was one, which I doubt, I had not the heart to run after it. I accompanied master and mistress to the railway station. I licked their hands, and would have remained with them in the carriage, if my female attendant, Christy, had not carried me away. When the train was gone, I was in despair. A Victoria biscuit could not console me. To relieve my feelings during the absence of my benefactors, I kept a journal, from which I select a few passages.

'Cannot describe Christy's solicitude about my happiness. She is constantly trying to amuse me. Every fine day I am taken out for a walk. To-day, I was taken to see a steam-boat. Did not like the deck: too many people. Much pleased with the cabins; because I could easily jump into and out of the beds, which are almost level with the floor. At a baker's shop Christy bought for me a thin cake of gingerbread, which a boy took from me while I was carrying it in my mouth. Don't like boys, and neither do I like dogs, for they often take my biscuits. Have just heard that master and mistress are in Paris, and will not be home till nearly the end of May. Do they ever think of me? Can they be aware of my anxiety for their return? I know I am only a little doggie; yet have I not been endowed with feelings of attachment to my benefactors, and do I not give up all for their society? When, when will my kind friends come back, and relieve the aching heart of their faithful Fiddy? *May 23—Evening*—I am delirious with joy. *They* have come home. How happy has been our meeting! I licked over their hands and face. And they did not forget their poor little doggie when hundreds of miles away! They have brought me two sweet biscuits from Paris; and as a souvenir have presented me with a china-cup out of which to take my milk in the morning! Kind master and mistress, Fiddy will know how to be grateful!'

For a number of years Fiddy was our solace, our DELICUM. Never having been addressed rudely, and having experienced no injury or neglect, but having, on the contrary, been uniformly treated with kindness, and a proper regard to her feelings and habits, she was unconscious of any fear of injury. Like a happy and light-hearted child, ignorant of sorrow, she was usually playful and amusing, with the additional recommendation of being free from the pettishness of over-indulged children. Many persons have some oddity of manner confirmed into habit. Some men, when puzzled, scratch their heads; others, when pleased, rub their hands. Fiddy had an eccentricity of this kind. When excited by any pleasing emotion, such as the prospect of going out, she scratched her shoulder with her right fore-leg. That leg at length gave us some concern. Having gone through a small stream when heated with running, she became afflicted with rheumatism, and at times held up the leg in a state of pitiable agony. On these occasions a jug of hot water being procured, she stood with the leg in it till the pain had vanished, and her playfulness was resumed.

Unassuming and unaffected, her perfect simplicity of character excited our admiration. Fiddy was a study. Well off, as may be said,

in her circumstances, she gave herself no airs, never was the least uplifted. Treated as a companion, she furnished constant interest and amusement. To old acquaintances she ever gave the same kindly greetings—welcomed all alike; demonstrating her affection only in a higher degree to those who paid her marked attention. To our grief, she began to fail in 1856. She walked feebly about the grounds outside the house, and could no longer take distant excursions. On her birthday in July 1858, she was decorated for the last time with her silver bell and her medal—a gold dollar which I had brought with me on purpose from the United States. Her breathing was very bad. She panted dreadfully. Much of her time was spent in sleep. Her last days were at hand. Our dear Fiddy died peacefully in the arms of a young lady, when about to remove from the country to the town in October 1858. She lies buried on a sunny green knoll overlooking the Tweed, where flowers blossom and birds sing every returning summer over her tiny grave.

Stunned with the loss, we were without a dog for several years. At last, overcoming sorrowful recollections, we ventured upon another. This second one, Fanny, was also a King Charles, but a degree smaller than Fiddy. We got it when it was very young in 1864.

Fanny grew up a charming toy-dog, and in her turn was the DELICUM of the household. In her winning gentleness and affection were repeated the amiable qualities of her predecessor. In some of her habits she was not so *prononcée*, yet was in no respect less a general favourite. From the tranquillity of her manner we were enabled to secure some good photographs of her in different attitudes. Circumstances induced us to take her on several excursions to distant places, and she never gave any trouble. In the railway trains, she couched by my side for hundreds of miles without stirring, and scarcely was any one aware of her presence. I have pleasant recollections of her rambles with me under the trees of the Mall in St James's Park, where Charles II. used to stroll about with his pet dogs,—of her merry gambols on the yellow shingly beach at Ventnor in the Isle of Wight,—and of observing with interest her nasal scrutiny of the massive blocks of Stonehenge. She had not the robust constitution of Fiddy, but she might have lived equally long, had she not been injured by a kick which a brutal wretch gave her one day in the street. She never fully got the better of this unprovoked assault. Weakened in her powers of locomotion, she finally was unable to walk, and died prematurely in June 1873, every one in the house lamenting her decease. She lies buried on the flowery bank along with Fiddy.

This sorrowful event brings us to our acquisition of Charlie, the present dog-incumbent of the dwelling, and inheritor of the trinkets and trappings to which he has naturally succeeded. It would be difficult to speak too flatteringly of Charlie. Sprightly, with an inexhaustible fund of good temper, he is never, even when a little provoked, been known to snap, or appear surly. Vigilant as a watch-dog, he barks at any unusual ringing of the bell at night or noise outside. While in town, his favourite seat is on a small table at the parlour-window, to observe what is going on in the street. When taken to the country, he bounds like a mad thing among the trees,

and is ever ready for a ramble. One of his eccentricities is the vanity of shewing his tail. On being fondled, he turns and twists, bringing his tail forward for general admiration. In such cases he does not mind being laughed at when placed on a table to go through his amusing pantomime. Another eccentricity consists in rolling over delightedly on any morsel of biscuit given to him. Tossing it up, he rolls over and over upon it in the height of enjoyment, affording an instance of how little will give pleasure. Visitors declare that Charlie is the funniest little dog they ever saw. Matchless for his attractive beauty, he does credit to the breed, of which he is acknowledged to be a fine specimen. Though speaking from a limited experience, I venture to think that for a quiet dwelling no toy-dogs can excel the King Charles variety, provided they are properly trained and cared for, according to the delicacy of their constitution. The breed has latterly become scarce, and pugs are now all the fashion; but from this new taste there can scarcely fail to be a rebound to the beautifully formed and gentle kind of dogs described in the present sketch.

The pleasure and advantage of keeping a dog of any variety must of course depend on the way it is bred up and treated. It is impossible to speak too severely of the manner in which dogs are often neglected, misused, and allowed to roam about to the annoyance and danger of neighbours. The dog, like every domesticated animal, has rights to be respected, and this should be kept in remembrance, if nothing else is. The toy-dog in particular, with its keen sensibilities, pines under neglect, and will die from misusage. Thoughtless or hard is the heart of those who forget their duty to the little creature, which on its part never fails to shew its love and fidelity by all the means in its power.

Happily, the greater number of persons we have known as keepers of toy-dogs have not erred on the score of neglect, and they have been rewarded accordingly. Their pets within the limits of their capacity have helped to assuage lingering sorrows, and like gleams of sunshine have cheered many a lonesome dwelling. Therein lies the philosophy of the question. Less or more all minor and companionable domesticated animals may be deemed assuagements sent to lighten the burden of cares or misfortunes, or at the very least to meliorate solitude. A contemplation of the grander works of Nature, magnificent scenery, the rich garniture of fields and gardens, the higher flights of genius exerted in pictorial delineation, the welling springs of literature, are all inspiring, and in their way soothing and consoling. But the cravings of the desolate are for what is inspired with LIFE, for in living and familiar forms we are fain to possess objects on which, for lack of something better, the finer affections may be drawn out and expanded. The cat purring in tranquil enjoyment beside the poor widow knitting at her solitary fireside—the small bird gleefully chirruping in its cage in the sunshine, reminding orphan girls of what had given pleasure to a deceased parent—the droll, or it may be pathetic, words repeated by a starling in the confined apartment of an artisan suffering from domestic bereavement—may they not be accepted as something to soothe asperities that are felt to be almost insupportable? Viewed in this light, pet animals

are subjects of interesting reflection. They are, in a sense, the auxiliaries of religion and philosophy.

The small domesticated dog, from its singularly companionable qualities, is beyond all inferior creatures to be appreciated. In its very simplicity and gentleness there is a reflex action to induce in us kindly views, as well as a calm contentment with our condition. In little Charlie we have a daily monitor in the ordinary concerns of life, obliterating cares, and reminding us how much there is to be thankful for in blessings that are apt to be passed over with indifference.

W. C.

THE ARAB WIFE.

A TALE OF THE POLYNESIAN SEAS.

CHAPTER XII.—WANDERING.

My chief concern was with Bikur. His state of mind was evidently deplorable. Between his fear of me and his dread of the adventure, he was fast approaching a condition of absolute desperation. I consulted Fatima; and that admirable woman proposed that by taking hold of his superstition we could turn it to our advantage, as now it was to our weakness. She advised that I should go through some mumbo-jumbo performance, and give to Yarifa and Bikur a pebble or trifle of some kind as a fetich, which would protect them from all assaults of magic might, unless made by a wizard with more powerful spells than I possessed. Accordingly we set ourselves to work to devise some plan by which I might overawe Bikur into placid obedience by working upon his imagination, and then raise him to the height of bliss by the pretended talisman. I rummaged over the desk of the Dutch captain for papers that might give me a hint, and I perceived for the first time that there was a set of drawers secreted under the compartment for paper. I ferreted about the compartment with my fingers, and at length convinced myself that the spring was on the outside; which proved to be the case. Touching one of the ornaments, the head of a long shallow drawer became manifest; and this I drew out with much eagerness. It contained nothing at the first glance; but a more careful survey shewed a little piece of paper rolled up and tucked under the velvet which had been loosened for the purpose. I unrolled it, and saw in Greek characters *αμνηση*. Fatima ejaculated 'The word, the word!' and rushed for the casket; but as she could not read Greek she had to let her lord accomplish the task. I carefully arranged on the casket the letters *anake*. But to my disappointment the lid remained fast. Then I tried it according to the pronunciation, *anake*; nothing budged. Sure that it was the word, I tried it again as I thought it would be pronounced by the Dutch, *aeanake*, and the lid of the casket opened instantly.

It disclosed a necklace of rubies so magnificent that I thought at first I must be dreaming, as large rubies are quite rare. Yet here were twenty-three stones, each of them of quite unusual size, and in the centre was an opal of the most dazzling lustre as large as a good-sized walnut. I threw it with irrepressible enthusiasm around the snowy neck of my darling wife, who received it with becoming modesty. We both resolved to look upon it as a favourable omen. Taking the casket

to the cabin and hiding it away with its precious contents, Fatima returned with a lightsome countenance. 'Husband,' said she, 'I see the way to pacify Bikur and Yarifa, and secure them in perfect obedience. You told me that from what you had seen in an almanac on board the Dutch vessel, there will shortly be an eclipse of the moon. Let us land if possible, and do you draw a circle on the ground and utter conjurations. Then as the shadow steals over the moon, produce the casket, and place it in the circle, speaking in Arabic, and ordering the enchanter who by his spells is darkening the bright circle of the moon, to command me to give the magic word.'

I thought this an excellent device. So far as my memory served me, the eclipse ought to take place some time about midnight of the following day, so I took the first opportunity of calling Bikur on one side. Giving the wheel to my wife, I went forward with him, under pretence of shifting the foresheet, and said: 'Bikur, the decisive moment will soon arrive; and I feel that I cannot blame you for being afraid, because you have no talisman to protect you from afrits.'

'Ah, sahib, that is so. If I had a talisman like my lord's, I would not care for Sheitan, or for an army of ghouls and afrits; Bikur is a brave man; but what could he do against spirits?'

'That is true, Bikur; and I am now going to give you a talisman more potent than the seal of Solomon. You see this golden ashrafi. I give this to you freely, and know from this moment that nothing above ground, under ground, in the air, or in the water, can harm you.'

Bikur's gratitude was unbounded; and he immediately passed a string through the sacred coin, and hung it round his neck. 'Now Bikur, you are safe, but the moment approaches. To-morrow night most likely you will see an extraordinary phenomenon; but you have a potent talisman, and you must not fail me on that occasion, or I cannot guarantee your life.'

'What must I do?' said Bikur in a not very courageous tone.

'You must stand with a drawn sword on my right hand, and Yarifa must stand behind us, holding up this charm,' shewing him a quadrant. 'If you run away, all is lost.'

Bikur went away with a very cheerless countenance to share his troubles with Yarifa; but on the whole his aspect was more cheerful, and he evidently put the strongest confidence in the talismanic piece of gold.

As day broke on the following morning, we opened a little bay so beautiful, it seemed like a picture from a fairy tale. The water was perfectly clear, and the sandy bottom, strewn with shells and coral, was so distinct that I expected the pirogue would ground every moment. But there was no danger, for near as it seemed it was fully twenty feet down. Fish of the most brilliant colours were darting about, and at the head of the little bay was a bank of soft green turf. Beyond that was another much higher bank, on the top of which tall trees were growing. Here we landed; and climbing the second bank with some difficulty, as it was pretty steep, Bikur and I found ourselves at the entrance of a thick forest. There were hosts of monkeys and parrots among the trees. We threw ourselves down under some trees that had a fruit so much resembling the guava, that I plucked

some and commenced eating without scruple. If they were guavas they were twice the size of any I ever saw in India. As I sat enjoying the luscious fruit and revelling in the strangeness of the situation, I could not but feel touched by the thought of what my darling Fatima was undergoing for my sake. Not by a look nor by a gesture, far less a word, did she ever complain of any hardships, or give me cause to remember how much she had sacrificed for me.

I rose up, flushed with the determination that came what might I would never cease to be to Fatima as fond as I was then—that I would never cease to be the lover as well as the husband. The underbrush was not enough to impede our progress, and we tramped through for about a quarter of a mile, which was as far as I dared go for fear of losing myself. On our way back, Bikur spied an opening in the wood, and making for it, we found one of those natural glades which so puzzle philosophers. When I come to think of it, it is strange that there should be a spot where trees will not grow, although the seeds of hundreds of kinds must be blown there. Such places serve as breathing-holes to the forests, I should think.

At one end of the glade three deer were feeding peacefully, and I resolved to have two if I could. They were small, and speckled with white beads like Ceylon deer. I had taken the precaution to bring a musket with me, and after seeing that it was in good order, I took a deliberate aim at the fattest, and fired, bringing it down. Then, what a commotion took place in the trees! Birds of every description rose in clouds in the air, monkeys shrieked and chattered, and lizards rustled down the brown trunks. The whole place swarmed with awakened life. The deer remained where they were, and I secured another one with the same ease. Then carrying one on my shoulders, followed by Bikur with the other, I paddled back to the pirogue.

When the hour approached for the incantation scene we all paddled ashore in the sampan. I handed the quadrant to Yarifa, who received it with a shudder, and Bikur snatched up his sword with an air of desperation. Giving the casket to Fatima to carry, with the word formed *all but one letter*, and having my gun on my shoulder, we started for the glade. On arriving there I measured off a circle, and levelled the long grass so that the casket when placed in the centre could be plainly seen. As nearly as I could judge, the time of the eclipse was at hand; so taking my place in the circle, I ordered them to get in their places, and we remained motionless till a black shadow began to eat into the bright disc of the moon. I chanted some doggerel verse, and the black shadow grew larger and larger, until the whole was obscured. It was now nearly pitch-dark, and I called in English, 'The word, the word, the word!' Whereupon, while Fatima solemnly emphasised the word *aen-an-kie*, I stooped, and picking up the casket, touched the remaining letter, which threw open the lid of the mysterious case. The effect was what I anticipated; Bikur and Yarifa both sunk to the ground in a half-swoon; and it was not until the moon had resumed her brightness that I could restore them to reason.

'O Allah, Allah!' cried poor Bikur; 'is it over?' 'Yes; thanks be to Allah,' I replied. 'It is over, and the casket is open.'

They looked, and saw the opened lid, and burst into a rhapsody of delight.

'I was not afraid; was I, my lord?' said Yarifa.

'No; that you were not,' said I heartily. 'And I am sure that Nizam will reward you both well; and so will I.'

'Shall we go back now to Gezireh?'

'Perhaps, my friends.'

Whereupon the poor deceived creatures kissed my hands rapturously, and were transported with pleasure. We returned in the best humour to the pirogue, and hoisting sail, steered straight for Gezireh. But as soon as Bikur was fast asleep, my wife came to my assistance, and we veered round and stood once more for the south. At length I heard Bikur pointing out to Yarifa, with the air of one who has made a great discovery: 'See, black woman; now we return to Gezireh, the land is on this side; but when we were going to the magician's land, it was on that side.'

'That's so,' said Yarifa. 'You're a clever man, Bikur.'

'I am indeed; and we may be proud that we were selected for this great enterprise, for no one could have done it but us.'

Still southward and still southward we crept, the wind seemingly chained to our sails. I had heard of this extraordinary quiet weather among these islands and around Polynesia, and yet it seemed incredible. But at length the sails flapped idly to the masts, and we were becalmed.

'Ugh, ugh!' cried Bikur; 'not far from Gezireh now; I know it by the calms.'

But there is a southern latitude of calms as well as a northern, and this I explained to Fatima; we were approaching the termination of our voyage, though no wind, not even a sigh of wind, disturbed the dreadful monotony of the sea. The sun rose and sunk every day on a waveless ocean, and we drifted with the current steadily southward. I pointed out to Bikur how we were drifting, and he looked melancholy for a moment, but soon consoled himself with the idea that he was on his way home.

THE INDIAN COBRA.

DR FAYRER, late Professor of Surgery in the Calcutta Medical College, in his splendid and valuable work *The Thanatophidia of India*, says that the annual mortality from snake-bites in that country is 'perfectly appalling,' and gives statistics which, although very incomplete, too well confirm the assertion. Inquiries on this subject were first instituted by Sir H. Bartle Frere, when Commissioner of Sind, and have since been prosecuted by others; latterly very much at the instigation and through the personal exertions of Dr Fayrer himself, who has also long and earnestly studied the natural history of the serpents of India, and all the questions of physiological and medical interest relating to the bites of the venomous species, not only with scientific and professional ardour, but also with the philanthropic object of discovering means by which human lives might be saved.

In January 1870 Dr Fayrer addressed a letter to the secretaries or political agents of the principal governments of India, soliciting information as to loss of life by snake-bites. Replies were received

containing reports from many districts of these governments, of the number of deaths from this cause in 1869; but from others no return was made, so that the information obtained was very incomplete. In forty-eight districts of Bengal, 6219 deaths were reported as having taken place; and in other parts the losses amounted to 5197: making a total of 11,416 fatal accidents of this kind. But it is to be observed that from a large part of India the doctor neither applied for nor received information, and that even from the governments to which his circular was sent the returns received were very incomplete, the area represented by them being less than half of the peninsula of Hindustan; besides which there is reason to think that even in the districts from which returns were obtained, many cases of death by snake-bite must have occurred besides those which were reported, such an accident being too ordinary an event to attract much attention; and Dr Fayrer does not hesitate to express his belief that if full information could be obtained from the whole of Hindustan, 'it would be found that more than 20,000 persons die annually from snake-bite!'

We have been favoured with the following details concerning one of the deadliest of the Indian snakes, the Cobra, by a gentleman who has passed many years in the East. He says: The Cobra da Capello (*Naja tripudians*), sometimes called the Hooded or Spectacle Snake, is the commonest and at the same time the most dreaded of all the venomous snakes of India. When excited or confronting an enemy, it assumes a remarkably graceful posture of defence, by raising the fore-part of the body to a height of perhaps a foot and a half from the ground, and at the same moment drawing together into a coil the remaining portion of its body and tail, till it forms as it were a kind of spiral spring, which aided by the elasticity and muscular power of its frame, enables it, so soon as it deems its opponent to be within range of its stroke, to launch itself forward with lightning rapidity. In an instant the bite is given, which, as we shall presently see, is nearly if not always fatal.

I believe that the cobra da capello is found throughout Hindustan, though it is far more numerous in some localities than in others. In some of our Bengal stations where I have been quartered, I have not seen a single cobra nor noticed the trace of one from one year's end to the other; in others, especially during 'the rains,' hardly a week has passed without several having been seen.

In Bundelcund, especially in the neighbourhood of Jhansi and Lullutpore, the cobra is unusually common. It harbours chiefly in holes under the foundations and in the walls of old ruined forts and temples, in honey-combed ant-hills, in the sides of old wells, or amid the debris of fallen buildings and deserted outhouses, particularly where grass and jungle have been allowed to grow, and rubbish to accumulate. During the day it is rarely seen abroad, but lies coiled up asleep in its place of concealment, sallying forth in search of food so soon as darkness sets in. It preys chiefly on frogs, toads, rats, young birds, and the like. It will readily invade a house in quest of such creatures, and on entering a room travels round the angle made by the walls and

floor. During the hot-weather months, when, on account of the oppressive heat, doors and windows are left wide open throughout the night, and there is nothing to bar the entrance of vermin of all sorts, it is nothing unusual in the morning to find portions of the slough cast off its body, by a prowling cobra. Houses with thick thatched roofs, particularly old buildings, are always more frequented by snakes than tiled dwellings of recent construction.

It is a mistake to imagine that the cobra, or in fact any other kind of serpent that I am acquainted with, will ever bite or molest human beings, unless disturbed, meddled with, or provoked in the first instance. On the contrary, the greater majority of snakes are only too glad to be permitted to escape and beat a retreat when discovered by man; and unless driven into a corner or followed up, speedily vanish into some old rat-hole or other hiding-place, without shewing, beyond a threatening hiss, a sign of opposition to, or desire of retaliating on the intruder. I believe that nearly always it is the sense of fear more than anything else that induces the cobra, when surprised or touched even without being hurt, instantaneously to turn and bite the person who has alarmed it. The boots and trousers or leather gaiters usually worn by Europeans when out walking or shooting, in a great measure protect the wearers from the teeth of snakes.

Natives of India, on the other hand, in spite of the fearful loss of life annually occasioned among them by poisonous snakes, appear to be perfectly callous and indifferent about guarding against such dangerous creatures, neglecting to take even the most ordinary precautions. Some classes sleep upon *charpays* or native bedsteads; but the great majority, especially of the poorer orders, sleep on the ground with their heads wrapped up, and their bodies enveloped in a sheet or blanket. A cobra, when travelling at night in search of food, instead of circling round, often crosses over the body or legs of a sleeper; the weight and movement of the reptile partially awakes the unfortunate slumberer, who, in a half-conscious state, puts out his hand to discover what has disturbed him, probably touches the hideous intruder, and is immediately bitten.

When I was quartered at Jhansi in 1872, a poor boy in my service, while lying asleep in the veranda of my house, was fatally bitten by a cobra. It was early in September, one of the most unhealthy and trying months in the year, when to exist it becomes absolutely necessary to keep punkahs unceasingly moving at full swing night and day. I employed three punkah coolies, two men and a boy, who, by taking it turn about at intervals of two or three hours, were expected to keep the long fan suspended from the ceiling, in perpetual motion over my head. Two of these punkah coolies were father and son; the latter, a lad of fourteen or fifteen, often accompanied me in my shooting expeditions, and was rather a favourite. One evening, after tossing about for some time, I managed at length to fall into a doze, and must have slumbered for some hours, when I was startled in my sleep by hearing some one in the stillness of the night suddenly cry out. I was soon asleep again, but was aroused about daylight by my bearer carrying a lantern, who, in an excited tone of voice, informed me that one of the servants

was very ill, and desired me to come and see him immediately. Hastily donning a pair of slippers, I followed my attendant down some steps, round a corner of the house, till presently we reached the veranda facing the south. A group of natives were stooping over and supporting the head of the poor punkah coolie lad, who was insensible; and to my horror, on raising his hand, although it was still warm, I could feel no beat of pulse at the wrist. There were two dark punctures from which the blood was still oozing; and then it suddenly struck me that a snake had bitten him. No time was lost in procuring a bedstead and four bearers, and despatching the sufferer to the hospital, only a few hundred yards distant. But it was all too late; for on reaching the building, the native doctor in attendance pronounced the unfortunate fellow to be quite dead. Probably the reptile had attempted to cross over the prostrate form of the sleeper, and on being touched, had immediately retaliated by biting him.

Determined to discover the hiding-place of the snake, we removed from the veranda a large folded tent and numerous boxes and cases; and nothing remained but two packing-cases, with a small bell-tent rolled up and resting on the top of them. Two men had partially lifted the canvas, when an exclamation from one of them drew my attention to the spot, and on looking round I saw a snake coiled up on the lid of the box from which the tent had just been raised: almost beyond a doubt the one that had caused the death of my poor servant. It was a cobra of moderate size and very dark colour. The creature began to glide away, so I looked round for something to strike a blow with, and on a table close at hand was the very thing I required; what we in India call a *fly-flapper*, a stout cane some two and a half feet in length, with a piece of pliable leather fastened to one end of it. Just as I got hold of the leather end of this weapon, a red setter of mine, named Dash, who had been attentively watching the operation of removing the tent and boxes—doubtless hoping that a rat or some such animal would bolt out from behind them and afford a ‘chivy’—caught sight of the cobra, now rapidly stealing off; and with hair bristling erect sprang forward, barking furiously. Instantly the cobra drew itself together, with a threatening hiss, elevated its head and neck, and with flashing eyes and quivering forked tongue, prepared to defend itself; but my dog was too knowing to close with such a formidable adversary, and only kept it at bay till his master came to his assistance and despatched it.

A fruitful cause of fatal accidents among natives by snake-bites may be attributed to their careless habit of walking barefooted when travelling, or when passing through the jungle. Some classes wear low shoes, which, however, seldom reach above the ankle, and though guarding the feet of the wearer to a certain extent, yet afford no protection whatever to the leg, which is almost invariably left bare up to the knee. The consequence is—especially during the rainy season, when vegetation springs up over the whole country with extraordinary rapidity and when all kinds of snakes are on the move—that numbers of unfortunate natives, travelling on the public roads by night as is their wont in order to avoid the heat of the sun, or passing through the grass by day, are fatally bitten, without having caught

a glimpse of the deadly creature which they have inadvertently crushed under foot or brushed against in passing.

Besides the cobra there are other snakes, such as the krait, Russell's viper, the *Ophiophagus elaps*, &c., the bite of which is certainly fatal if the strongest remedies are not instantly applied; hence it is that the government reports as to the exact species that has caused a death, are so frequently 'uncertain.' The victim is bitten, the snake disappears before the victim has had time to identify it, and the mischief is done.

Our Indian cantonments are constantly visited by roving gangs of snake-catchers or, as they are more generally termed, snake-charmers. These wandering bands—generally consisting of three or four individuals belonging to the lowest caste—gain a livelihood by travelling about the country from station to station, and exhibiting to the residents for a small gratuity numerous reptiles, chiefly snakes, which they carry about in baskets. That these people are veritable snake-catchers, I readily admit; for undoubtedly, from familiarity with the habits and resorts of various descriptions of snakes and constant practice in their vocation, they succeed in capturing numerous cobras, rock-snakes, and other serpents both large and small; but whether they are entitled to be called snake-charmers, or in other words, whether, by means of certain musical sounds, they have the power of enticing the wild snakes of the jungle out of their holes and hiding-places, so as to admit of their being captured, is another thing altogether. Natives of the country—who are in general an exceedingly superstitious race—declare these people to be gifted with mysterious and almost supernatural powers over snakes. I have myself, however, no faith in snake-charmers, for I have repeatedly detected them attempting by subtle impositions and clever acting, to delude lookers-on into the belief that they were dealing with veritable wild snakes, when all the time the dancing cobras that made their appearance at the sound of the pipe were some of their own tame snakes, placed in certain spots beforehand.

These professional snake-catchers are many of them, in addition to their regular vocation, most expert jugglers, and exceedingly adroit at all kinds of sleight-of-hand tricks. It is their constant practice to 'turn down' a few tame snakes in a garden-hedge or somewhere close in the vicinity of a house they intend paying a visit to, ere they present themselves before the sahib, the owner of the premises; and then, with every appearance of good faith, the rascals request permission to be allowed to clear the compound of snakes; at the same time stipulating for a reward, perhaps one rupee a head for every snake they may succeed in catching. If the gentleman of the house should happen to be a *griffin*, or new-comer, likely enough he will be induced to lend an ear to so plausible a request, and at length promise these crafty rogues so much for each snake they succeed in catching. Soon, to his horror and amazement, hideous serpents of various dimensions are produced, one from the straw in an empty stall in the stables, another from the garden-hedge, and so on; till at last, perhaps the fraud is carried too far and discovered; but I have known such deceptions successfully practised upon the unwary, and the snake-charmers liberally rewarded for simply

inducing, by musical sounds, some of their own pets to shew themselves and be recaptured.

It is right, however, here to say that certain descriptions of serpents—chiefly of the genus *Naja*, I believe, though I am not positive on this point—most undoubtedly are susceptible to, and in a measure become fascinated on hearing musical sounds. I have constantly seen tame snakes in the possession of snake-catchers, on hearing the sound of the pipe, erect themselves and sway their heads from side to side, and beyond a doubt shew pleasure at the strain; but I have never once seen a wild snake go through the same performance; and I believe that only tame reptiles carried about in baskets and 'broken in' for such an exhibition so conduct themselves. I have repeatedly offered snake-charmers five rupees to bring out from its sanctuary by means of music, a cobra known by me to be 'at home,' but invariably all their efforts have been in vain.

One of the favourite performances of these wandering gangs, especially when there appears to be a likelihood of extracting a larger *baksheesh* than ordinary from the lookers-on, is for one of them to so irritate and provoke a cobra (I need hardly say one that has had its fangs extracted), by pushing his knuckles into the reptile's face, till at length, after several failures, the snake makes good his stroke, and bites its tormentor on the hand, so that blood flows from the wound. Immediately he feigns terror, and produces a peculiar-looking gray substance termed a snake-stone, but which is simply a piece of bone rendered porous by having been calcined; after blowing upon the punctures produced by the serpent's teeth, he places this 'stone' upon the wound, and informs the spectators that by its means the poison will speedily be absorbed, and all danger avoided. There are many who actually believe in the efficacy of these stones; but I venture to say that if such a very simple remedy were really effectual, and a genuine specific, the snake-stone cure would speedily be brought into universal use. It would appear, however, that these people really prize these so-called stones, for I have been present when money has been offered to them to part with one, but declined.

Perhaps the strongest argument against this snake-stone cure, and which I think greatly tends to prove that it is only one of the many deceptions practised on the public by these people, is, that these very men often themselves fall victims to the bite of the cobra, though at the time in possession of a stone which they assert to be capable of working a cure. Moreover, when these professional snake-catchers have to deal with an undoubtedly wild cobra in full vigour—although as a rule they display extraordinary pluck, skill, and resolution in capturing it, and on the first favourable opportunity will with wonderful quickness seize hold of and secure it—an attentive beholder cannot fail to remark the extreme caution and watchful management they display on first clutching hold of the animal; their whole demeanour and action differing unmistakably from the off-hand, careless manner which they assume when grasping one of their own harmless specimens; and it is an undoubted fact that these men really dread the consequences of a chance bite from a wild cobra quite as much as other mortals do, and are well aware that nothing can withdraw

the deadly venom from a wound, or save life, when once the poison has mingled with the blood.

When a deadly venomous snake bites vigorously, the poison which flows through the two fangs is instantaneously introduced into the tissues, thence into the blood, and in an incredibly short time into the whole system. The result is that the nervous system of the victim is paralysed, complete prostration ensues; resulting, in the great majority of cases if not in all, in certain death. The only hope appears to be in the immediate and complete stoppage of the circulation of the blood between the wounded part and the rest of the body, by ligature or by excision or amputation. But the poison enters into the system with great rapidity, and such means, to be of any use, would need to be employed without almost a moment's delay. Ligature, to serve its purpose, must be applied without regard to the pain which it causes, for unless the cord is tightened so as to completely stop the circulation, it will be ineffectual; and an endeavour must then be made to remove the poison completely from the wound, by scarifying the punctures made by the fangs till the blood flows freely, which may be aided by sucking or by cupping. Sucking with the mouth is dangerous to the operator, because the poison may enter his system through the lips or other part of the mouth if the skin is anywhere in the least degree broken. And finally, the actual cautery is to be used, or a mineral acid or carbolic acid applied to destroy the poison. The natives are accustomed to apply a live-coal or to burn gunpowder on the wound. But even with all the 'remedies' as yet known, including copious doses of brandy and ammonia, and the immediate efforts of skilled surgeons, it is sad to be told by men such as Dr Fayer and others who have devoted time and energy to the subject, that there is almost no hope of saving life if the bite has been inflicted by one of the most venomous snakes in full health and vigour.

AN OLD MANUSCRIPT.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART II.

June 30.—Mr Salkeld has been ill. His health has always been delicate, and he has overworked himself unsparingly, doing nearly all the duty both Sundays and week-days. Day after day his labours amongst the parishioners have been almost unceasing. The result of this was a fever, caused by a neglected cold. His illness has brought out new qualities in two people: his own patient calmness and resignation in suffering—for he suffered much—and Miss Stanhope's perfection in the sick-room. He came down-stairs to-day for the first time; and my heart ached to see his poor worn face as he sat there in Mr Stanhope's own easy-chair, vacated for him, in spite of all remonstrance, by our good vicar.

July 7.—Mr Arthur Selwyn has come home from college. Effie says her mother is angry with him because he has wasted his time and run into debt. All young gentlemen do it, Effie says. He is not yet Bachelor of Arts. But he does not seem to mind that; at least he is the reverse of sad. And he is very, very good-looking. And such agreeable manners; quite high-bred. He is quite six feet high. Effie says that now we may expect enjoyment to set in. He took us for a long drive

yesterday; all the way to Spindlestone Heugh. It was delightful. What rare company he is; so full of life, and so careful of us! Oh, it is sweet to be taken care of. Mr Salkeld never helps one over a stile; but he is good in a different way.

Poor Mr Salkeld! he is still in delicate health. He is going to Scarborough for a time. How we all feel for him! He goes away much against his will, for he says he feels like a sentinel deserting his post. So earnest and true to duty is he.

July 20.—The old Grange is quite another place since Arthur Selwyn came home. There have been several dinner-parties. I was at all. Sarah Cessford came in such a ridiculous dress last night; not in the least becoming. Fancy green ribbons with a pale complexion! She will have fifteen thousand pounds when her aunt dies, it seems. Mr Arthur pays her great attention, which makes Effie so indignant. But I suppose he can please himself as to whom he pays attentions. Every young man does, I believe.

There was a great picnic one day, got up by the Cessfords, and the young Lord Framlington was there—a very girlish young man. Effie and he were together all day, while Mr Arthur Selwyn paired off with Miss Sarah Cessford, leaving me in the hands of Gavin, a most silent gentleman always, but especially so on that day, for he was jealous, yet not interestingly so. 'Lord Framlington is a confounded young milkop,' said Gavin Cessford. Effie was quite made up with her *viscount*. I should not have thought it of her.

July 24.—I have made a discovery. They say Mrs Selwyn is a Roman Catholic. That is not her religion; it is match-making. Miss Stanhope sees it quite plainly, that she wants her son to marry Miss Sarah Cessford, and her daughter to be Lady Framlington. She is devotedly fond of her son Arthur. I cannot blame her for that; but she will wreck his happiness if she forces him into a mercenary marriage with that Miss Cessford. He as much as told Effie that he rather *dislikes* her than otherwise. If so, then, oh, what hypocrites men can be! She is fat and stumpy, and looks so odd by his six feet of height.

July 29.—I cannot understand Arthur Selwyn. One day he is all sadness and tenderness to Effie and me, and the next quite reckless and gay. Effie says he was never so before. She thinks it is the talked-of marriage that has altered him. She believes he will never have her. But Miss Sarah is hardly ever away from the Grange now. And one day Mr Arthur, when he heard she was there, jumped on horseback and galloped away, and didn't come home to dinner, nor till late at night, Effie said. Effie waited up for him, and he had such a wild look on his face when he came. His mother heard him come in, and came down-stairs; and Effie says there was a scene. But her brother never spoke back in reply to the fierce angry words Mrs Selwyn said to him. And he looked pale, and sad, and miserable.

Effie went to his room an hour afterwards, and found that he had not gone to bed, but was sitting on a chair leaning his head on his hand. She was trying to comfort him, when who should walk in but Mrs Selwyn, who threw herself at Arthur's feet sobbing, and moaning, and kissing his hands, with all her long black hair down upon her shoulders; and she had to be carried away at the last by her husband. Effie said it was quite

dreadful and terrifying. But Arthur sat motionless, like a statue. Miss Stanhope says they are deeply in debt, and that Mrs Selwyn has made up her mind that Mr Arthur shall redeem the last relic of the estate, which was bestowed upon their ancestors by one of the Norman kings. But the struggle between pride and affection is great, and that explains the strange scene which Effie described.

August 5.—Mr Salkeld has returned much better in health. It was quite a relief to me to see his calm happy face again. He commenced parochial work on the very day of his return, and he has let fall words which prove that he has been at work in Scarborough too. There is indeed no rest in these noble natures from the labour of love.

August 12.—Things have changed sadly at Selwyn Grange. A little while ago all was gaiety and sunshine; but now gloom has settled down again. Effie was here one day in sad trouble, and her lovely eyes were quite red with weeping. She says her brother has completely lost all his good spirits, and wanders all day in the woods and fields by himself, or takes long rides. And this on account of the marriage, she is sure. Her mother never swerves on that question. And Arthur himself has never opposed a single objection. But his heart is not in it, Effie says. How dreadful this is.

I could not help crying with Effie for sympathy; and afterwards when we had gone into the garden together, whom should we see come riding past in the lane but Mr Arthur Selwyn and Miss Sarah Cessford! They rode close by and never saw us, so closely were they engaged in conversation. She was looking quite red at something he was saying to her; and he looked all smiling and lover-like. I looked hard at Effie, and she was as pale as death.

'O Arthur! you hypocrite,' she gasped. 'Oh, how can he do it!' and the deep tears welled up in her pure blue eyes. She put her head on my shoulder, and I clasped her in my arms, and again we cried together. I felt very miserable too, more so than I could account for at the time.

Hour after hour I lay awake that night thinking over the sad human scheme that was being laid together by that dreadful dark lady of the Grange; and the more I thought of it the more my heart grew heavy and sore. To think of his whole life's happiness destroyed in that way by his own mother. And he so handsome, and every one so proud of him, and his endearing manly ways. I seemed to look like this far into the future years, and I seemed to see him tied to his plain stupid wife—not a good feature in her face, and her gait—O dear! it was all so dreadful to think of. But what, after all, does it matter to me? Only for dear Effie's sake, of course, for it will almost break her heart. Why does not his father interfere? He looks as cold and unsympathetic as a smiling stone statue. He has no more feeling than the marble effigy of his ancestor, Colonel Prideaux, in the chancel of the church.

I cannot get Mr Salkeld to look on this enormous fault of Mrs Selwyn as I do; he says it is all right enough, and that Miss Cessford is a very worthy young lady. But what has that to do with it? What is worthiness, if he cares no more for her than he does for me, perhaps? Indeed, I think he has quite forgotten me. We have not met for a month, except just distantly on Sundays.

August 20.—I must write to-night, Sunday

evening as it is. They are engaged; Mr Arthur and Miss Cessford, I mean. Effie just found time to whisper it in my ear as we left the church door together, with such a sad, sad look on her sweet face.

And oh! for the hand-shaking that took place in the porch between the two families. And so gracious Mrs Selwyn can be when she chooses. But she only smiles with her lips, shewing her close white teeth; her eyes never smile.

Poor Mr Arthur looks gloomy and resigned. I am glad he did not look cheerful, at all events. I watched him in church, and never a word of the sermon did he hear, I am sure. He looked up only once all the time, and strange to say, he looked straight at our pew, right over the heads of the Cessfords. His eye met mine. I felt my face burning. I was annoyed at being caught; but it served me right for not attending to Mr Salkeld, as I ought to have done. I wonder *she* does not notice his gloom; but I suppose he will be all smiles to her. *Mem.*—He has his mother's eyes, but so different! Deep and dark as night, like hers; but unlike hers, tender and truthful.

August 29.—I was out walking alone to-day, and whom should I meet but Mr Arthur Selwyn! I met him right in the face coming round a corner, and I looked foolish, if I look as I feel always, for I had been thinking of him all the way up the lane. He was in no way put out, but as pleasant and polite as he, and none better, can be, that ever I knew. I returned his bow rather distantly, and did not offer my hand. I did not know why at the time, nor do I now, except that I could not. I think he saw my reserve, but he shewed no sign, for he talked much as he used to. We walked on slowly side by side for some time, although somehow it seemed a short time. I found that he was not *quite* so gay in his conversation as usual; just a shade of gravity seemed to have come over him. Amongst other things he talked of his return to Oxford and of a resolution he had made to recover his lost time. 'Fancy!' he said; 'quarter of a century old and still at school!'

But no word passed between us in the least relative to his engagement, which all the people in the country round know of by this time. We parted, as we met, with formal bows. I was going to shake hands with him, but was too late, so we parted ceremoniously. Effie says there is no doubt about his passing all his examinations this time, as he can be deeply clever when he chooses.

September 2.—I am constantly meeting Arthur Selwyn on my walks now; but I am hardly ever alone; either Miss Stanhope or Mr Salkeld is with me; so I have had no more confidential talks; if our talk could be called confidential. He often rides out with his intended, and it seems they are asked out together to evening parties. He is a general favourite, whatever she may be, poor girl!

Sept. 25.—Received a letter from London. They all insist on my going back at once, as I have exceeded my leave of absence. My uncle inclosed a touching letter from little Ned.

Sept. 28.—The result of my London letter has been a family council, with every member of it against my going back at all. If I consult my own wishes, and incline to those who draw me hardest, I fear that I shall never leave this dear

spot, for I have learned to love it and all my friends here very dearly. But I cannot forget that my uncle and aunt have the first claim on me; so back I must go, for that letter the other day was only the most pressing of several that had been sent. The council ended in no settled plan. I had no heart to plead my own cause against them and against myself. I must try each one separately. It is very hard going against the stream, especially when that stream is the current of my own wishes; but my duty is clear if my heart breaks. Mr Salkeld has taught me the divine significance of that word *duty*, and my duty is to conquer selfishness.

Sept. 30.—I have made a compromise. It is settled that I go back to London for the winter. 'Just as if for a visit,' the dear vicar said. I confess that I am a little, just a *little* disappointed. I was wishing they would use strong measures to detain me a little longer. But Mr Salkeld and his compromise settled the matter. Ah me! Effie will miss me, I am afraid. She is violently opposed to my going, and will hear of no compromise. 'Who would be buried in London?' she said. *Mem.*—How sweet it is to be loved like this.

Here my diary ends, and it was never resumed; so the remainder of the story of those sad years of my life must flow from my pen in such fashion as comes soonest to hand. I shall therefore gather together the threads of my narrative from memory chiefly. A few years ago—nay one year ago—I could not have written that which I now propose to write, though it had been to save a life. But I feel that I can now look back on the past more calmly, and in a mood more befitting one who has done with the present world as surely as a nun behind her convent walls. I have struggled hard—so hard—to attain this more peaceful state of being. I have fought against my erring nature; and in prayer, I have appealed to the Supreme Disposer of all things. I have thus, I say, entered into the season of calm, the final phase of sorrow. But how far from happiness that rest of mind lies is not to be unduly spoken of again in these pages. I will endeavour, therefore, to write as if detailing the scenes, and the feelings of the persons acting in those scenes, as of something apart from myself, with such assumption of fortitude as may be permitted me.

My diary leaves off in the autumn of the year 1814, when, after a happy summer in the north, I returned to London for the winter months. My uncle, aunt, and cousins received me with open arms. They rejoiced; we all rejoiced (for I could not help falling into their joy) like children. Dear little Ned danced round and round me like a young wild Indian, and for a while forgot the beloved subject of rabbits. Poor little man!

It was a winter of almost continual fog and rain, so that I was much indoors; and it seemed to me irksome beyond measure, after the open-air life at the dear old vicarage. But I summoned up all my strength of will to restrain my impatient nature, and to make myself useful to my aunt and among the children; and this discipline did me good. Our Christmas festivities were not very gay, for as I have before mentioned, my uncle was a stanch Nonconformist; and the dear good man held many opinions that I never could think either just or reasonable. Nevertheless we had parties in our

own little set, and enjoyed ourselves in a quiet way. But often and often did my heart carry my thoughts back to dear Northumberland—to the dear little village, and those there that I loved so well—to Selwyn Grange and Effie—dear Effie!

I dreamt one night I saw the Grange by moonlight. I shall never forget the horror of that dream. I saw the old battlements, the mullioned windows, and the cloud of dark ivy which clung to the walls, lying all deep in shadow—dark and sombre as the tomb. Suddenly a great flood of light fell over all the place, and everything stood out clearly and distinctly as under the mid-day sun.

Slow and awful on the hushed air tolled once, twice, the heavy boom of the death-bell—the bell whose tongue I knew; but in my dream the sound of it was weird and oppressive, and I felt upon my bewildered senses a weight of stifling sorrow and suspense; and ever a dark foreboding. Then the hall-door of Selwyn Grange opened slowly and silently, as if by unseen hands, and looking within, into the gloomy old hall where the armour hangs, I saw an open coffin on trestles. Shadowy and indistinct it seemed, and I could not—although my heart-strings almost broke in the effort—make out the face of the occupant. But as I looked, and looked again, I became aware of a dark muffled figure standing by the side of the coffin—standing erect and motionless, but looking down, seemingly, with an intent and mournful gaze. It was the figure of a man; but I could get no sight of his face, which was closely covered with a cloak. Then I also seemed to become aware of a second figure in the presence of the dead: that of a woman, also in deep funeral robes, and with long masses of black hair flowing all around her. A deep sense of impending evil seemed to thrill me like icy stabs at the sight of this woman, and I gasped to utter a word of warning to the tall muffled figure standing opposite, seemingly unconscious of her presence; but in vain, for I could not form one articulate word. My agony was fearful; for I saw the hand of the woman raised aloft as if to strike, and heard a voice exclaim: 'Die, Arthur! last of your race!' Then the blow fell like silver gleam upon the breast of the motionless figure, and again clanged out the deep hollow voice of the bell. At the same instant I awoke to a sense of life, with a wild piercing cry that rang in my ears with the boom of the death-bell, and my whole body writhed and trembled with fierce mental suffering. My aunt rushed into my room, and I clung to her and moaned and implored her not to leave me to myself to sleep out the rest of that dreadful night.

About a fortnight afterwards I received a letter from Effie with the news of the death of her grandfather; and that Arthur, who was at home at the time, had quarrelled with his mother on the very day of the funeral, which took place at midnight by torchlight, at the old church; and that, when urged by Mrs Selwyn to press his suit with Miss Cessford, he had bitterly reproached her with the part she had taken in the matter. But Effie wrote that he still held to the engagement, with a sort of despairing resolution. This, it appears, was the first time that Arthur had expressed in words his dislike to the match; and Effie thought that he would not have done so but that his mother importuned him in the

presence of the dead. Effie chanced to enter the room at the time, and so she witnessed the scene betwixt mother and son—so alike, and yet so unlike!

I need not follow in detail the monotonous round of our daily life at my uncle's house. I tried my very best, and with my whole heart to accommodate my life to theirs and my ways to their ways. But evermore the longing would come for one sight—only one, said my traitor heart—of that other home in the far north. This longing grew more and more as the weeks and months of the long winter rolled on, and at times I was miserable; and though I strove hard to conceal it, my relatives began at last to be aware of the change in me. I was filled with grief and shame when my kind aunt gently questioned me on the subject, and I could give no reason for my strange disquietude. I asserted over and over again that I was quite happy, not deceiving myself nor deceiving others. At times I almost hated myself, and tried to force myself into contentment; but all in vain. And equally in vain did I try to analyse the mental state into which I had fallen; I was blind to myself; and irrational morbid fancies began to assail me, and always, ever growing, that craving for what I knew not, except that some phantom hand for ever pointed Northwards. Some irresistible influence seemed to drive the current of my sleeping and waking thoughts in that one direction.

It was agreed by my uncle and aunt that I wanted change. 'Young people cannot be bound down always to routine,' reasoned the dear good folks; and so, as the spring came round, it was understood that I should once more visit Northumberland. Oh, the soothing joys that settled upon my unquiet heart, my rebellious unknowing heart, when this was resolved amongst us!

The time came; and once more I arrived at the dingy inn at Newcastle, and this time Mr Salkeld himself met me with the conveyance, thus making Mark Jervase a bitterly discontented man, he said. And in truth, Mark (with whom I had contrived to strike up quite a friendship) was as sour as vinegar about it. Effie was at the vicarage to receive me with the others; and again I found myself once more under that roof! The dear girl looked sad and ill; and as soon as we were alone she disburdened her heart to me. Lord Framlington had made her an offer, and she had refused him *point-blank*, and another family quarrel had been the consequence. But it was all made up again, she said; for her mother had thrown out a hint about Gavin Cessford and his four thousand a year. That gentleman had, it seemed, become all at once exceedingly shy, thinking probably, that if a lord was not good enough, a country squire would be laughed at; so it had befallen that Effie, the star of beauty of all the north, was left for the time loverless. But that was no affliction to her; she was dreadfully uneasy on her brother's account.

'Dear Rose! it is not natural the way he takes it. On the marriage question he is apathy itself. Oh, if I were a man, would I be so driven for all their paltry money!' she said, firing up.

I soon saw that poor Effie's fate in matrimony was a very secondary matter in her mother's eyes compared with that of the adored son; and yet

that son, so dearly loved, she was ruthlessly condemning to a life that must prove to him a living death, from what Effie said. Arthur Selwyn had quitted the university, and was at that time serving in the militia; for all the country was then in arms, and wild rumours were on every tongue about the great dethroned Emperor, who had recently escaped from Elba.

Mr Salkeld and I soon fell into our accustomed groove. Many calm and happy days we passed together at this time; and I gradually found the mad fever of heart and brain, that had so cruelly tortured me in London, yield to his influence and the beneficent labour of the daily work he gently imposed on me. Ah! I was soon to know how delusive was this calm, this lull of feeling, that had been granted me so mercifully. Too soon the angry tide of the turbulent heart disturbed this fair serenity. But at the time I believed myself to be thoroughly happy, except that now and again, when I was with Effie, some look of hers, some motion, or some tone of voice, would pierce my heart like a knife; I knew not why. So much did Mr Salkeld and I seem to understand each other, and so open-hearted seemed our daily intercourse, that the incident which I shall now relate did not come as a surprise; indeed I was in some measure, almost unconsciously, prepared for something of the sort occurring.

GOSSIP ABOUT LIGHTHOUSES.

A STRANGE lonely life must be that of the light-keepers in such a lighthouse as the Eddystone, the Bell-Rock, or the Skerryvore—three men dwelling by themselves in a sea-girt tower, apart from all the rest of mankind, on a rock often entirely covered by the sea, far from the nearest shore, and all communication with it not unfrequently cut off for weeks by stormy weather, which makes landing on the rock impossible; the waves often dashing furiously against the lighthouse, almost to the height of the lantern, and sending their spray far over its highest pinnacle. Many scenes of grandeur and sublimity they must behold, such as even the stoutest-hearted can hardly contemplate without awe; and many scenes also of great beauty, when the sky is clear, and the wide expanse of water is brightened by the sunshine, and the smoke of steamers and white sails of ships give a pleasing variety to the prospect. Yet it seems almost impossible that time should not occasionally hang heavy on their hands, notwithstanding all the resources of the library with which they are supplied, and the duties which they are called on to discharge, among the most important of which are the lighting and extinguishing of the lamps, attending to them whilst lighted, supplying them with oil, cleaning glasses and reflectors, keeping the machinery in proper working order when the light is a revolving one, and ringing a bell or making fog-signals during fogs—duties that involve a great responsibility. Shut out from the rest of the world, any unusual incident must be of peculiar interest to men so situated; and some of the incidents that do occur are in their own nature very interesting.

Some lighthouses are in pleasant situations on the sea-coast, and consist of a tower elevated merely to a height sufficient for properly shewing the light, with the houses and gardens of the light-keepers adjacent to it. Others are in lonely places, far from other habitations of men; on high rocky promontories, where they overlook the waves and are exposed to the utmost violence of winds, and where the voices of sea-birds mingle with that of the ever restless sea; or on wastes of barren sand, where sparsely growing grasses are almost the only vegetation. Some are on islands large enough to afford space for gardens, or even pasture for a cow or two; others on islets so small that their surface exhibits only patches of grass, and it is with difficulty that the light-keepers can cultivate a few vegetables; whilst others still, are on bare rocks often washed by the waves, or on rocks which, together with the base of the lighthouse itself, are covered by the sea at high-water. In the last-named cases, the tower is the only building, the light-keepers dwelling in it when on duty; it is constructed so as to defy the utmost fury of the waves, and is elevated to such a height that in storms they may not dash against its lantern with violence sufficient to injure it.

The force of the waves and the height to which they dash against lighthouse towers in the most exposed situations, are astonishing; and we cannot contemplate them without reflecting how great a triumph of science and art these buildings are, and how strange life in them must be. We find some interesting information on these points in the copious Appendix to the Report of the Royal Commission appointed in 1858 to inquire into the condition and management of lights, buoys, and beacons—a bulky parliamentary blue-book of 1861. At the Longships Lighthouse, on the top of a conical rock opposite Land's End, the Commissioners were told by the head-keeper that in heavy weather, waves break about the lantern seventy-nine feet above high-water mark; and that on one occasion the sea lifted the cowl off the top so as to admit a great deal of water, by which several of the lamps were extinguished, and all the men were employed in baling till the tide fell. He added that there is a cavern under the lighthouse at the end of a long split in the rock, and when there is a heavy sea the noise produced by the escape of pent-up air from the cavern is so great that the men can hardly sleep. Concerning the Scilly Bishops' Lighthouse, on a rock in the south-west of the Scilly Isles, of which the Commissioners say that the building is 'perhaps the most exposed in the world,' they give the report of the head-keeper that 'the spray goes over the top of the lighthouse,' the height of which is one hundred and ten feet. At the South Bishop Rock Lighthouse they were informed that 'spray occasionally strikes the lantern, and it has broken the lower windows of the dwelling-house'—that is, of the part of the tower so called. Yet the South Bishop Rock Lighthouse is on a rock—off the coast of South Wales—of such size that

there is a patch of grass before the door, and the tower rises to a height of one hundred and forty-four feet above the sea. The Smalls Lighthouse, also off the coast of South Wales, is on a low rock about twenty miles from land, but so large that there 'is room to walk about.' It is above high-water mark; but we are told, 'the sea breaks all about the lantern of the old lighthouse, and over the new building when there is heavy weather.' The 'old building' was a wooden lighthouse erected in 1778; the 'new building' a stone one in course of erection in 1859, when the visit of the Commissioners was paid. The Commissioners add, from information given to them by the head-keeper, that 'green seas pass up to a point about thirty-two feet above the level of the rock.' If this is the case in the Irish Sea, what must be the height to which 'green seas' reach on the lighthouse towers in the Atlantic Ocean! As to the force of the waves, although no stone had been removed from its place since the work of the new building began, an iron bar was shewn to the Commissioners, about two inches thick, and fixed in the rock, which had been bent like a wire.

The height to which the waves sometimes rise when they dash against rock, has been found at the North Unst Lighthouse to be far greater than appears from any of the instances already adduced. This lighthouse is one of the most recently erected on our coasts, and is of special interest as being situated at the most northern point of land in the British Islands. It is built on a *stack* or outlying rock of conical form, of nearly two hundred feet in height, at the north end of Unst, the northernmost of the Shetland Isles. The rock, as seen from the south, very much resembles a sugar-loaf in form; and its steep slope could only be scaled with difficulty, previous to the cutting of steps in it. On the north it is nearly perpendicular, and exposed to the full 'fetch' of the ocean. The top of the rock affords little more space than is sufficient for the site of the lighthouse. There is only one part of the rock where a landing can be effected, and that of course only in favourable weather; so that the light-keepers are as completely cut off from communication with the rest of the world as if their islet abode were many miles from land. The dwelling-houses of their families are on the island of Unst. The first light shewn here was from a temporary tower erected in 1854, at the suggestion of the Admiralty, for the benefit of the North Sea squadron in the Russian War. A temporary iron lighthouse and dwellings were constructed at Glasgow, and carried to the spot, with all materials and stores, by a steamer; and light was shewn after little more than two months, although landings were accomplished with difficulty, and everything had to be carried to the top of the rock on the backs of labourers. The temporary buildings being nearly two hundred feet above the level of the sea, it was supposed that they would have nothing but wind and rain to withstand. But in December, during a severe gale from the north-west, the sea broke over the rock, broke heavily on the tower, and broke open the dwelling-house and deluged it with water. Similar storms occurred during the winter: seas fell with violence on the iron roof of the dwelling-house, and on the lantern of the lighthouse, so that the light-keepers began to entertain serious doubts of their own

safety. It was resolved, therefore, to raise the permanent structure fifty feet above the rock. This lighthouse was completed in 1858.

Most lonely and remote from all the ordinary scenes of busy human life are the lighthouses of Skerryvore and Dubh-iartaig; towers of one hundred and forty feet high, on rocks in the Atlantic. Dubh-iartaig is a rock of considerable size, rising above the level of high-water, but over which the waves break in a moderate gale. It lies in the open ocean, twenty miles from the island of Mull, and a like distance from that of Colonsay. Skerryvore is a reef of low rocks, equally in the open ocean, about twelve miles from the island of Tiree, where the families of the light-keepers live, and about twenty miles west from Iona.

Life in such a lighthouse must be somewhat monotonous, notwithstanding all its duties and responsibilities. We are glad to learn that every lighthouse and light-vessel on the British coasts is provided with a library. We hope the libraries are really good ones, and contain a sufficient number and variety of books. But we are curious to know what amusement the light-keepers may at any time find, or what variety of incident, other than what arises from the changes of the weather and the sight of passing ships; and the blue-book already referred to tells us something of this, although much less than we could have wished. At Skerryvore they sometimes catch a few fish, 'such as little cod and rock-fish.' They occasionally see seals, but when the seals come about the rock no fish can be got. It is curious, however, how seldom in the notices given of the lighthouses anything is said about fish or fishing. We have been able to discover only two instances of the kind besides that of Skerryvore. We are told that at the Bell Rock the keepers catch a few fish; and that at the southern of the two lighthouses on the Maidens' Rocks—two rocks about half a mile apart, and eight miles from the shore, on the north-east coast of Ireland—they catch fish off the rock, and the head-keeper 'has a boat of his own, for the use of the boys to catch fish.' Probably, however, fishing is a more common amusement of light-keepers than can be learned from the blue-book, and it may be supposed that the Commissioners did not inquire very carefully about it. Of seals, mention is made only in one instance besides that of Skerryvore. The head-keeper at the Smalls Lighthouse once caught a young seal by descending from the tower and placing a bag in front of him as he slept. 'He poked him up with a stick, and in he went.' He was more fortunate than Hector M'Intyre in the adventure with the phoca related in the *Antiquary*.

Birds are much more frequently mentioned in this blue-book than any other kind of living creatures. The head-keeper at the Smalls said 'that he had caught woodcocks in September, as also larks, starlings, and blackbirds.' Five years ago, he caught a partridge on the night of the first of September. He thought that probably the shooting had driven him out to sea. "He was very fat indeed." It will be remembered that the Smalls Rock is twenty miles from land. At South Stack Lighthouse, which is on the west coast of Anglesea, on an island under a cliff, and joined to the land by a bridge, 'the sea-birds are preserved as a natural fog-signal, and are tame. Gulls sit on the walls and close to the lighthouse, and scream continually. A few white rabbits sat

among the young gulls, and seemed on terms of perfect intimacy.' The screaming of the sea-birds that frequent rocks and islets is again mentioned as a useful natural fog-signal, in the case of the Skerries, on the north-west coast of Anglesea. The Skerries Lighthouse 'is built on a low island of some extent, covered with birds, mostly terns, which are preserved. No other fog-signals are used here; but mariners can determine their position by distinguishing the noise of the birds which frequent these two stations'—namely the Skerries and the South Stack. We confess we would rather not be on board of a vessel whose position it was necessary to determine by such means, in proximity to rocks so dangerous. 'The birds which kill themselves against the lanterns' at the Skerries, we are told, 'are starlings, thrushes, blackbirds, larks, linnets in flocks, and ducks occasionally.' Of Copeland Lighthouse, on an island of considerable size at the entrance of Belfast Lough, we read, that the birds killed are blackbirds, thrushes, starlings, larks, linnets, ducks, and widgeons. At the Maidens, 'a few duck and teal are killed, but seldom.' At Skerryvore few birds are killed; those that are being mostly blackbirds, thrushes, and starlings. Once a woodcock was killed. At the lighthouse on Buchan Ness, a promontory in Aberdeenshire, starlings and blackbirds alone are mentioned as ever being killed. At the Bell Rock, few birds are killed; but thrushes and blackbirds occasionally are in winter. The birds killed at the Isle of May Lighthouse are starlings, thrushes, blackbirds, woodcocks, and small land-birds. It is added that 'no sea-birds ever kill themselves.' At the Fern Islands Lighthouses, blackbirds, thrushes, and ducks are killed, but not many.

Meagre as is the information thus collected, it is interesting. The opinion has long been pretty generally entertained by naturalists that birds of passage perform their migrations chiefly by night. We see flocks of swallows congregating by day, when the time for their departure approaches, but we rarely see them depart. Some morning we find they are gone. Other birds, it would appear, often choose the night for their flights. Is there in this a provision of nature against the dangers to which they might be exposed during the day from hawks and other birds of prey? Birds, it appears, in their nocturnal flights are attracted by a bright light, as insects are by that of a candle, or salmon by the torch that is used by leisterers for 'burning' a river; and thus it happens that, flying with great rapidity, they dash themselves against the lantern of a lighthouse and lose their lives. But how is it to be accounted for that starlings, thrushes, blackbirds, linnets, and other non-migrating land-birds should in their flights go so far out to sea as some of the lighthouses where we are told of their being killed? What induces them to pass, as perhaps they are doing, from one shore to another many miles distant? These are questions which we cannot answer; but the facts upon which they are founded may help us to understand the general distribution of our native birds over all parts of the British Islands that are suitable for their respective habits and requirements. It is also particularly noteworthy that no sea-birds, such as gulls, terns, &c. ever kill themselves on the lighthouse lanterns. That this statement of the light-keepers of the Isle of May

accords with the general experience of light-keepers everywhere, appears from the fact, that no mention is made of any sea-bird as amongst the birds killed at any other lighthouse. Can it be that the sea-birds of the vicinity get familiarised with the light, and learn to avoid the lantern? Or are we rather to suppose that never flying by night, they are not exposed to its dangerous attraction? That water-fowl of the duck tribe are amongst the birds sometimes killed is not surprising, when we consider their powers of flight, and the migratory habits of some of them that come to our shores in great flocks from the arctic regions in winter. A case happened some years ago of a wild-duck which flew against the lantern of Flamborough Head Lighthouse, and smashed it—the lantern—to atoms. The mangled body of the poor bird was afterwards picked up by the keepers.

It is much to be wished that some of the light-keepers of our lighthouses would make notes of their observations concerning seals, whales, birds, fishes, and other animals. Such records would be valuable; and might not some of them occupy their leisure hours in the study of natural history? They would find it a delightful resource in any of its branches which they might choose to prosecute; and we venture to recommend it to any of them who may read this paper. Interesting observations would then certainly be made, and new facts added to our stores of knowledge.

Life in the lighthouse is sometimes varied by the arrival of other visitors than seals or birds. The keepers of the Smalls Lighthouse told the Commissioners to whose Report we have been so much indebted, that 'a foreign ship once struck at the end of the rock in broad daylight. The crew, twelve men, leaped on shore; the vessel drifted about three miles and sank. On being asked how they fed so many men, the keepers replied that they always had six months' provisions when they came off.' Some lighthouses, easily accessible, are much visited during summer by tourists and pleasure-parties. Godrevy Lighthouse stands on a small islet off the coast of Cornwall, at the entrance of the Bristol Channel, and the keepers reported that the islet had been visited by a thousand people on Whit-Monday 1859. The head-keeper of the Skerries Lighthouse, when visited by the members of the Royal Commission, apologised for the condition of his lighthouse—although they thought it in beautiful order—saying that it was not so clean as it should be, 'because two hundred and fifty school children and their teachers visited the island yesterday from Holyhead, in a steamer.' They drank half a butt of water, which is scarce at the Skerries, and would put their fingers on the brass-work.

Lonely as life in a lighthouse must often be, the keepers seem to be wonderfully contented with their lot. The under-keeper at the Smalls indeed, complained to the lighthouse Commissioners that it was 'rusting a fellow's life away.' But he was an exception to the general rule. The head-keeper at the same place had been eighteen years there. The head-keeper of Innishowen Lighthouse, at the entrance of Lough Foyle, was seventy years old, and had been fifty-six years in the service. Many have entered the service young, and have grown old in it. Yet the remuneration is not very great; certainly not more than enough, when not only the nature of the service is considered, but the

immense importance of a faithful discharge of its duties. The four keepers of the Bell Rock Lighthouse—three of whom are always on duty, while one is with his family at Arbroath—have each fifty or sixty pounds a year, with house and garden at Arbroath; a stated allowance of bread, butter, oatmeal, vegetables, and beer; fourpence a day for tea, and a suit of uniform once in three years.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE PROPAGATION.

On this subject, correspondents of the *British Medical Journal* have lately offered some wholesome warnings. Dr H. A. Allbut writes as follows: 'There are three common ways by means of which infectious diseases may be very widely spread, and in the interests of sanitation, I desire to expose them. It is a very usual practice for parents to take children suffering from scarlet fever, measles, &c., to a public dispensary, in order to obtain advice and medicines. I need hardly enlarge upon the dangers which arise from such a proceeding, both to the children themselves and also to the public. It is little less than crime to expose in the streets of a town and in the crowded waiting-room of a dispensary children afflicted with such complaints. Again, persons who are recovering from infectious disorders borrow books out of the lending departments of public libraries; these books, on their reissue to fresh borrowers, are sources of very great danger. In all libraries, notices should be posted up informing borrowers that no books will be lent out to persons who are suffering from diseases of an infectious character; and that any person so suffering will be prosecuted if he borrow during the time of his illness. Lastly, disease is spread by tract distributors. It is the habit for such well-meaning people to call at a house where a person is ill and to leave him a tract. In a week or so the tract is called for again, another left in its place, and the old one is left with another person. It needs not much imagination to know with what result to health such a practice will lead if the first person be in scarlet fever or small-pox. The remedy for this is very simple: if tracts are necessary for sick people, let the distributors give (not lend) to the people in their districts.' He concludes by recommending, 'all sanitary officials to use greater endeavours in order to detect and punish such evident violations of the law.' Dr Hatherly calls 'attention to another fertile source of infectious disease—namely, the letting out on hire of suits of mourning clothes for funerals. This practice is by no means uncommon in poor neighbourhoods. The clothing thus loaned out from house to house may be, in fact often is, introduced into very hotbeds of infection, and is, when not disinfected, a dangerous medium for the spread of infection.' Dr Hutton offers a warning on 'the reckless manner in which parents allow their healthy children to run into the houses of acquaintances who have members of their families suffering from scarlatina, &c. I have often seen children thus affected surrounded by a perfect levée of healthy playmates, and under my own observation, I have seen the infection thus carried from the patient, and several families attacked;

and only within the last month, two children in separate families lost their lives in consequence.' All very timely hints these. The misfortune is they are not likely to meet with much attention.

LOST JEWELS.

IN addition to the anecdotes which have lately appeared in this *Journal* upon Lost Jewels, a correspondent has sent us other two. They are as follow :

Some years ago I was admiring the handsome rings of a relative of mine, when I noticed upon her little finger an insignificant little ring of pale gold set with a bloodstone. 'Why do you wear that trumpery little thing?' I asked; and in reply she told me the following anecdote.

'The night before my eldest son was born, I undressed as usual in my big bedroom up-stairs, and put my rings into a little china plate (which contained some oatmeal used for washing my hands) on my dressing-table. I had only two or three rings at the time, and amongst them was this little bloodstone, which had been given me by a school-friend before my marriage. My boy James was born the next morning; and so it came about that for the next fortnight or three weeks I neither wore nor thought of my rings. However, when I was convalescent and dressed for the first time, I naturally looked for my rings, and found all there except the bloodstone. Search was made for it through the whole room, and afterwards through the whole house, but with no success; it was not to be found. I never thought for a moment that it had been stolen, for it is of little value; and this turquoise hoop which had lain with it would have been much more attractive to a thief. Years passed; and James was a sturdy boy of ten, when some alterations being made in the house, the flooring of my bedroom was removed. Under one of the planks was found the skeleton of a mouse with my bloodstone ring round its neck. It had evidently ventured upon my toilet table in search of the oatmeal, had unwittingly pushed its head through the ring, and had returned to its hole to die: an unintentional thief strangled by its useless prize.'

The second is an out-of-door story. A young lady, governess in a friend's family, was one autumn day walking with her pupils in their father's kitchen-garden. The children pulling at their governess's hands as she walked between them, loosened a ring which she wore, and before they noticed whither it sprang, the ring was gone from her finger and was nowhere to be seen. The garden-beds around, which had been newly dug over, were searched, so were the celery and cabbages growing near; but no ring was forthcoming. The governess mourned for the loss of her ornament, more particularly because it had been her father's signet-ring; and every day for some time she and her pupils searched the kitchen-garden, but in vain. A month afterwards she returned home for a holiday, taking with her a basket of garden produce, as a present to her mother from her pupils' parents: when lo! almost the first thing unpacked from the country basket was a fine hearty cabbage with a close green heart, amongst whose curled blades lay the much-lamented, long-sought-for signet-ring.

THE FALL OF THE YEAR.

BUSTLING leaves, which everywhere
Fall from branches cold and bare;
Fleeting sunshine, fading o'er
Breezy tarn and wind-swept moor;
Birds' last farewell ere they flee
To a land beyond the sea;
Moan of wintry wind o'erhead—
Nature weeps, for Summer's dead!

In my life a sad despair,
Empty hopes and aching care;
Vain regrets for Summer gone,
Lonely tears as days go on;
Vacant gaze and fruitless cry,
Dreary, dull satiety,
Moan at thought of kisses fled—
Memory weeps, for Love is dead!

But, though withered leaves and sear
Shroud with gloom the blossoms' bier;
Though the birds to other skies
Raise their amorous melodies;
Though the fickle sunshines woo
Brighter lands and seas more blue;
Shall not Spring's soft breath restore
Blossom, leaf, and bird once more?

And though Passion's heaven-born power
Lasted but for one brief hour;
Though those kisses heart from heart
Tore us—evermore to part;
Though alone I'm dreaming now,
And in thy last sleep art thou—
Death, perhaps, shall, some glad day,
Give thee back to me for aye!

DISTRIBUTION OF SEEDS BY PANTHERS.

Mr Alfred Smee writes: 'An interesting fact in natural history was revealed during the recent visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales to India. In one of the hunting excursions in the neighbourhood of Baroda a panther was shot, and numerous seeds were found to be attached to the skin. The seeds had two perfect hooks, manifestly designed to attach themselves to foreign bodies. As the panther moved about it collected the seeds on the skin and carried them about wherever it went; but when it rubbed against the shrubs, it of necessity brushed some off, and thus distributed them. These seeds were taken from the skin by an officer who was one of the hunting-party, and several came into the possession of Mrs Horner of Staines, a great lover of horticulture, who did me the favour of sending me specimens. I was so struck with the incident and the remarkable character of the seed, that, after accurately figuring it, I desired it to be sown at "My Garden," when it rapidly grew into a handsome plant, and produced beautiful clusters of tubular flowers. It was immediately recognised to belong to the genus *Martynia*; and on examination, both Professor Oliver, of the Royal Gardens, Kew, and Dr Masters agree that it is *Martynia diandra*, a plant which, although introduced into this country as far back as 1731, has scarcely ever been cultivated for many years. I have placed my specimen in the hands of Mr Sowerby, the Secretary of the Royal Botanic Society, Regent's Park; and the plant, with one of the seeds taken from the panther's skin, is now exhibited in the great conservatory.'

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